

MATWATCH

213 PINE HILLS AVE. AUBURN, AL 36830 (205) 825-7522

TURNER APPARENTLY SET TO
OFFER SURPRISE PAY-PER-VIEW
SHOW APRIL 2; MAY FORCE
WRESTLEMANIA V TO CLOSED CIRCUIT

BATTLE OVER TITAN PLANS
TO OPPOSE NWA FEB. 20 PPV
WITH LIVE SHOW FROM MADISON
SQUARE GARDEN

ATLANTA - MATWATCH has learned that Ted Turner, in response to a plan by Titan Sports to oppose a National Wrestling Alliance pay-per-view card Feb. 20 from Chicago, is rushing another PPV show for April 2, the day of the World Wrestling Federation's scheduled WRESTLEMANIA V. Three sources have told MATWATCH that cable operators covering a majority of the United States are backing the Turner effort and will not carry WRESTLEMANIA V as a pay card, which would mark the first major defeat of Vince McMahon's Titan Sports in the pay wars.

Earlier, MATWATCH had reported that the WWF would run a three-hour special on the USA Cable Network Feb. 20 opposite the NWA Chicago show which will feature a Ric Flair-Ricky Steamboat world title match. At the time, our information was that the WWF show would be a taped special; however, McMahon had planned to air the Madison Square Garden show---featuring a Hulk Hogan-Big Bossman cage match---live on USA in an effort to neutralize Turner's pay effort.

As a counter move, TBS---which is partially owned by a consortium of multi-system cable operators, including TeleCommunications, Inc., the largest in the business, began formulating plans to produce a previously-unscheduled PPV card on Sunday, April 2, the same day as Titan's major money-maker, WRESTLEMANIA V. Only once previously have two pay wrestling shows aired in the same day, the Thanksgiving SURVIVOR SERIES (WWF) and STARRCADE (NWA) in 1987. In that instance, SURVIVORS cleared eight million homes and STARRCADE, which was produced by Jim Crockett Promotions and not Turner Home Entertainment, only 60,000.

Efforts to reach NWA executives Jack Petrik and Jim Herd, both in Houston for the NATPE television conference, were unsuccessful but MATWATCH expects to hear from the two upon their return. But insiders have told MATWATCH that despite pleas from NWA wrestling officials that April 2 is too soon for a followup show, Turner himself reportedly ordered the show to be produced and has mustered enough support from cable operators to force WRESTLEMANIA off pay-cable.

Titan executives are expected to make a new money proposal to cable operators, which would allow them to share in a bigger slice of the pay revenue from WRESTLEMANIA. McMahon, as well, has agreed not to air the live special on USA Feb. 20 as an act of good faith but Turner has decreed the Apr. 2 NWA PPV special will go on regardless.

Several veteran wrestling media watchers say this situation could well touch off a bidding war between the Titan and Turner forces for major stars, if not settled amicably. "The war is definitely on," says a source close to the NWA. "Some guys could stand to make major bucks, even if they don't jump organizations. But we could be in for a chaotic time that is not necessarily best for the fan."

The last major confrontation between Turner and McMahon came in 1985, when Turner forced McMahon's WWF shows off of SuperStation WTBS after a financial dispute. A full analysis will be featured in MATWATCH next week.

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JANUARY 23-29

MATWATCH

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VOL. 1, NO. 31

STEVE'S SIDELIGHTS By Steve Beverly FROM GEORGE TO GEORGE...

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Five long hours we waited last Friday for the Auburn University marching band to make its appearance down Pennsylvania Avenue. It was worth the wait...just to be that close to a new President taking his oath--whether you voted for George Bush or not.

The day before---a two-month wait ended for 40 NWA wrestlers to meet their own creative destiny. George Scott, late of similar roles with the WWF, World Class and the Mid-Atlantic promotion, took a surprising oath as NWA booker and---if you listen to random talk, the move wasn't met with fireworks by NWA stars.

But I'll not join the caravan already trumpeting this move as a Dread Scott Decision of '89. I prefer to give Mr. Scott adequate time to prove his direction before passing judgment.

What could be positive offshoots of this NWA hire?

---Scott is not an active wrestler and hasn't been for 15 years. The move takes away the threat of an ego-driven centerpiece for NWA storylines.

---Scott has big-league experience in the WWF. While critics say Scott is overcredited with building the 1984 WWF explosion, many of his WWF peers believe this is a great move for the NWA.

---Insiders say Scott works well with Ricky Steamboat, which is essential for the upcoming Steamboat push.

---Scott has a good rep with the mainline media and helped bring World Class into the PRO WRESTLING THIS WEEK fold when Joe Pedicino was developing his format.

What are the possible negatives?

---Age. Questions exist as to Scott's ability to provide contemporary storylines for the '90s. Can he fashion compelling new angles? Of course, anything besides Dusty vs. The World would be refreshing.

---Talent. Will Scott stick with safe veterans or will he develop new, younger stars? One critic says, "I can't help remembering George turning Bam Bam Bigelow into Crusher Yurkof."

---Perspective. Some critics believe Scott may try to push the NWA too big too fast. The CWF rejected Scott as Eddie Gilbert's replacement for similar reasons because of concern he might try to inflate the CWF roster before it could be afforded.

My own initial reaction is one of surprise simply because I felt TBS would go with someone younger. If there is disappointment, it is that TBS did not at least talk to Bill Watts, who had expressed late interest in the job. But I do credit Jim Herd for this: he found the man he felt was right and made a decision, something not often done in the waning years of Jim Crockett Promotions.

I'm willing to give the man a chance. As a key MATWATCHer told us, "This isn't going to be a party for George. He has a lot of talent but he'll be under pressure from Ted Turner to deliver. If he doesn't, he'll be out."

Last Friday, I saw 300,000 people cheering wildly for a new President named George. It's going to take a lot of successful work to draw the same reaction for a booker named George.

PIPER'S PIT TO DEBUT ON FNN/SCORE; RODDY GETS RIGHTS TO NAME AND SET

LOS ANGELES - Roddy Piper and Lee Marshall have signed a deal with FNN/SCORE for a one-hour pilot for PIPER'S PIT, a combination wrestling-sports-entertainment talk show. PIT will premiere Feb. 26 at 11:30 p.m. (EST). Dan Wolf will produce.

Piper apparently has a letter from Vince McMahon agreeing to allow Roddy use of the old WWF segment name and the former PII set.

Wolf says the plan is for the show to go live weekly in a one-hour format as early as March. Randall "Tex" Cobb is tentatively scheduled as a guest and Wolf is negotiating with two wrestlers to appear. PIT will feature a call-in segment with wrestling guests.

In another note, FNN/SCORE expects to begin the 60-minute PRO WRESTLING THIS WEEK and CWA in a two-hour block in early April. Time has not been announced.

COMINGS & GOINGS

WHO WINS?: Some insiders call the Scott hire a cue that Jim Barnett is exercising influence over the new NWA since he pushed big for Scott.

IN EXILE?: Early speculation is that this is the end of Jim Crockett's influence. Unconfirmed word is Crockett will be meeting in Atlanta a shade longer than basically be named a "consultant" and stay in Dallas.

BYE, BYE DAVID?: By osmosis, David Crockett will probably soon be off TV. That's not yet confirmed by TBS...but plans are for Jim Ross to become the #1 SuperStation announcer and Tony Schiavone to take over both syndicated shows.

SYNDICATION: A new push to upgrade NWA syndie stations is underway this week at the NATPE programmers' convention in Houston. Jack Petrik and Ken Christensen of TBS will head the effort.

CLASH V: Revised card: 6-MAN TAG TITLE, Road Warriors/Tenryu vs. Sting/JYD/Hayes (Sting replaces Murdoch); Ricky Steamboat vs. Cruel Connection I (I'm told this quickie will precede an angle of sorts); Midnight Express vs. Russian Assassins. Paul E. Dangerously and Ric Flair will both appear. The rest of the card is intact as reported last week.

FEB. 20 UPDATE: Word from TBS is that Lex Luger will move into the PPV U.S. title match vs. Barry Windham at CHI-TOWN RUMBLE instead of the departed Dusty Rhodes. Nothing against Lex, who supposedly was set to win the Bunkhouse finals, but with the recent angles, Eddie Gilbert should have had that match.

VINCE'S PLOY: WRESTLING FORUM is reporting that Vince is pulling out all the stops for his Feb. 17 show at Chicago's Rosemont Horizon, including the first Savage vs. Hogan match, to dilute the crowd from Turner's PPV show three nights later.

TWO SIDES: Bob Armstrong's departure from CWF has a two-sided story, as usual. Bob claims he wasn't paid all the fees due him as booker before he was ousted and CWF officials say Bob simply refused to book quality independent grapplers. Brad has also left CWF and we're told they'll both work independent shows for a while.

CLEANING HOUSE: Jerry Stubbs & Tony Anthony also reportedly out at CWF. Jerry & Tony had been committee booking the circuit with Ron West & Charlie Platt.

TERRY TALK: I talked with David Woods Monday but he wouldn't confirm talk Terry Gordy has been offered the CWF booker's job with West. Terry, who's set on the circuit against a "Russian Assassin," may find it hard to handle that with his Japan duties.

EARLY CASUALTIES: Word is that no one was fired from the NWA meetings of Jan. 19 but Al Perez has reportedly quit, possibly to join Dusty Rhodes in Florida, and Bam Bam Bigelow will likely not return. Also, Randy Rose may be retained after all in another role.

CWF TV: Taping Wednesday night in Montgomery (some of these will be dark): Gordy-Assassin, Riches vs. Masa Chono/RPM Mike Davis, Kokina vs. Bullet (that will be changed).

DUSTY'S TRAIL: Rhodes is already answering the phone at FLORIDA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING, Inc. He purchased a reported 60% of the operation. Interesting: his future relationship with Gordon Solie. Gordon won't say this publicly but bitterness still exists over his dumping from the old NWA Florida show by Crockett & Rhodes.

NELSON'S HOUSE: The next ATLANTIC COAST 3-show series is skedded for a Feb. 1 taping but a booking problem has arisen with the building Nelson Royal wants.

SPLITTING HAIRS: The Savage-Akeem WWF match last Saturday added to the Hogan-Savage split storyline but I almost feel like they're dragging it out too long. In USA WEEKEND Sunday, Liz Poffo told how she met Randy "as a business associate," perfect pabulum for the NBC buildup.

D.C. FOLLIES: WWF has the best slot and station in the D.C. area, WTTG (Ch. 5), Saturdays at noon for the CHALLENGE show. NWA and WWF both have three hours a week in Washington but the NWA's shows are on Channel 50. That independent also runs a weeknight strip from 6-7, which includes GLOW, POWW, MCCW, NWA and AWA.

AWA TITLE: At deadline, no firm word on whether Verne Gagne slapped the AWA belt on Don Muraco Saturday night but the CWA angle in which Jerry Jarrett declared Jerry Lawler would enter the AWA and World Class territories as their world champions "and allow the two groups to hold tournaments to name a company champion" really slammed Gagne.

NEW BOOK: Received a copy of Robert Myers' new THE PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING TRIVIA BOOK from Branden Publishing. I'll review next week but at first glance, it looks like a great item for those of you who attended the UAWF trivia tournament. Cost: \$7.95. It's available from Waldenbooks, Doubleday or Bartow Stationers (or direct from the publisher: Branden Publishing Co., 17 Station St., Box 843 Brookline Village, Boston MA 02147). If you order from Branden, include \$2 for shipping and 75 cents for each additional copy.

STEVE ON THE AIR: For those of you in the Columbus GA area, I'll be on WRCG's revived WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER? program with Richard Hyatt, tentatively set for Feb. 3, the day of the NBC WWF special, at 12:05 p.m. We'll talk wrestling and take calls.

CABLE RATINGS RAP

(Week of Jan. 16-22)

	Rating	Share
USA/PTW (1/16)	3.3	4.8
USA/All-Am. (1/15)	3.0	7.7
TBS/NWA ME (1/15)	2.9	5.3
TBS/WCW (1/14)	2.9	5.1
TBS/A. M. (1/14)	1.5	4.1

(ANALYSIS: The Terry Taylor-Steve Lombardi angle drew one of USA's best Monday night ratings ever but I'm puzzled as to why. The Sunday WWF show pulled one of the top shares in months with nearly an 8. Moving the TBS show to 7:05 has resulted in ratings hovering near a 3 but I would be stunned if the numbers aren't over that for Saturday. The morning show seems to have slipped back into its old 1.4-1.5 pattern.)

NOTE: For week ending Dec. 25, the WWF drew an 8.5 on 234 stations in syndication but the 1.5 drop is attributable heavily to Christmas weekend dips in viewing and pre-emptions.

THE SCREENING ROOM:
BEST OF STARRCADE: 1983-1987

If one finds a shining spot behind the controversy of the NWA tailspin the past two years, it is found in the quality videos produced by Turner Home Entertainment. The most recent release, BEST OF STARRCADE: 1983-1987, supervised by Steve Chamberlain, is filled with enough pro wrestling nostalgia to make one wish for a time tunnel trip back to 1983.

The two-volume set opens with never-before released footage of the Greg Valentine-Roddy Piper dog collar match from the premiere STARRCADE, the NWA world tag team title victory of Ricky Steamboat & Jay Youngblood over Jack & Jerry Brisco, and Ric Flair's dramatic second NWA world championship win, a cage match over Harley Race.

The rest of the video takes you on a tour of the key STARRCADE events of the rest of the decade, including Dusty Rhodes' two title shots at Flair, the first Road Warriors-Midnight Express Skywalkers clash and the legendary "I QUIT" match between Magnum T.A. and Tully Blanchard in 1985.

Production values are first-rate and the four-hour length allows one to drink in the events in their entireties. Memory had failed me how well Bob Caudle and Gordon Solie blended in the '83 classics and how much energy Gordon exercised during the Piper-Valentine match. Caudle set up Solie for a background review of how close The Dean of Commentators had been (in the early '80s WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING years) to Piper's development as an NWA star.

My favorite of the four hours is the Steamboat-Youngblood vs. Briscos affair in which the classic finale of the series in which the Briscos became "scientific heels" shows just how much talent those four possessed. The workrate of the quartet was almost eyeblinding and one can savor how excellent a tag wrestler the late Youngblood was during his brief career which led him and Steamboat to a four-time reign as NWA tag champions. I never thought the Briscos sold themselves as heels well and I felt Jack was too identified as the All-American NWA world champion and lacked the personality to ever succeed as a villain. But they did make the wrestling confrontations spellbinding.

Even though many NWA aficionados lost their zest for Rhodes in the last half of the decade, the two shots at Flair are important historical pieces, if for no other reason than they were the archetype Dusty "screw job" endings---in 1984, when referee Joe Frazier stopped the bout because Dusty was bleeding too heavily (sound familiar?); and in 1985, when Dusty had won the NWA belt and was later stripped of it in the classic Tommy Young ref bump finish. Any future promoters wishing to learn how to antagonize fans should study this pair as a textbook.

Magnum T.A. does an acceptable job as host of the matches but I find a couple of flaws: Magnum is a bit too bland with the TelePrompTer and not enough background is given on the feuds for people who didn't follow the NWA in the early-to-mid '80s to understand how they were developed. Even the use of still frames could have set up the storylines better.

Some fans may be turned off by the eight minutes of spots for additional NWA videos at the top of the first tape but even they are entertaining just to remember how the various tapes were packaged for sale on TBS.

Still, the four hours are an NWA history buff's delight and I'd love to see TBS package some of the old WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING matches of the early '80s (Mr. R vs. Ted DiBiase, Wrestling II/Pez Whatley vs. Tully Blanchard/Larry Zbyszko, the Piper-Muraco angle) in what would be a period piece extraordinaire. And I can assure you, those tapes do still exist.

Rating: PILEDRIVER-PLUS. It's a must for any fan who loves to chart the course of a promotion's history.

IV TEMPO (Week of Jan. 16-22)

(RATING SCALE: PINFALL! - Must See. PILEDRIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor.)

NOTE: SOUTHERN is omitted from this week's rundown but will return next week. Also, because of my Washington trip, some promotions are listed with key matches and angles only for this week.)

(WCCW) - RECAP: Series of title changes during Eric Embry WCCW jr. heavyweight title reign. ANGLE: Arman Hussein returns as manager of Tim Brooks. No rating offered.

(CNW) - Tony Anthony/Jerry Stubbs d. Mike Jackson/Greg Brown; Johnny & Davey Rich d. Randy Barber/Jason Walker; Kokina d. Randy Hogan/Bill Hollis (Holliday) in handicap match; Black Bart d. Bucky Ziegler; Brad Armstrong d. The Hunter. VIDEOS: Jeff Jarrett, Jerry Lawler, Bill Dundee. ANGLES: Jonathan Holliday appears to insult Austin Idol by calling himself "The Universal Heartthrob"; Anthony & Stubbs attack Davey Rich and "break his hand"; Tom Prichard spins "Wheel of Fortune" and draws #15. After denying anyone has #15, Brad Armstrong appears to claim lucky number but Prichard sprays him with a can of hair spray. BOMB-PLUS...the angles simply couldn't make up for weak matches on this show.

(CWA/SYND.) - Beauty & the Beast skedded to wrestle Bill Dundee/Tracy Smothers. Beauty (Terry Garvin) said unable to wrestle because Pookey the Dog is sick. Beast takes on Dundee until a "guard" appears at ringside and bashes Smothers with a chair, then both jump Dundee. ANGLES: Skit sets up Lawler-Mantel rematch for "world" title with Ricky Morton to come in as heel ref; Lawler-Jerry Jarrett send AWA & World Class belts back as "company championships" and declare Lawler a "unified world champion." POWERSLAM.

(WWC) - Batten Twins draw with Dan Kroffat/Bobby Jaggers; Samoan Tamu d. TNT. DRAW.

(AWA) - Recap of SUPERCLASH III including Jerry Lawler d. Kerry Von Erich for unified AWA/World Class title when ref stops match. No rating offered.

(ATLANTIC COAST) - WORLD JR. TITLE: Nelson Royal d. David Isley; Rock & Roll Express d. Larry Stephens/Trent Knight; Squash winners: Doug Somers, M.O.D. Squad, Deaton Brothers. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(FLORIDA) - ARENA MATCH: Mike Graham retains Fla. title vs. U.S. Steel when Scott Hall attacks both men; Johnny Ace/The Terminator win squash before Steve Keirn attacks Terminator with a board; Ace/Terminator demand Fla. title match with Nasty Boys. RESTHOLD.

(PORTLAND) - Top Gun d. Al Madril; Art Barr d. Rex King; Abuda Dein wins DQ over Carl Stiles; NORTHWEST TAG TITLE: Southern Rockers d. Grappler/Buddy Rose to keep belts; Col. DeBeers d. Mike Golden. ANGLE: Roddy Piper transforms Art Barr into Beetlejuice. DRAW.

(PACIFIC COAST) - Buddy Wayne d. Roberto Mendoza; Billy Two Eagles d. The Riotmaker; Kenny Khan/Joey Jackson d. Moondog Moretti/Ole Olsen in 2-3 falls; ARENA MATCH: Rip Oliver d. Tiger Chung Lee to win Pacific Coast heavyweight title. BOMB.

(NWA/TBS) - [WCW]: Michael Hayes d. Russian Assassin II (Jack Victory); Butch Reed d. George South; Mike Rotunda/Kevin Sullivan d. Randy Hogan/Gene Miller; Ricky Steamboat/Eddie Gilbert d. Barry Windham/Ric Flair when Steamboat pins Flair with flying cross body block in PINFALL! rating match. PILEDRIVER...The best TBS show in years and certainly, the Steamboat-Gilbert win was the best TBS match since 1984.

[A.M.]: Midnight Express d. Agent Steel/Trent Knight; Hayes d. Jerry Price (Butch Reed watches at ringside); REPLAY: Steiner-Rotunda TV title match of previous week on WCW; Other winners: Abdullah the Butcher; Al Perez; Reed. RESTHOLD.

[NWA MAIN EVENT]: Larry Zbyszko d. Kendall Windham; REPLAY: Steiner-Rotundo match of previous WCW; Eddie Gilbert d. Kevin Sullivan; Original Midnight Express d. M Ex when Dennis Condrey uses object on Stan Lane. POWERSLAM-PLUS...but Schiavone should have hosted solo because it looked bad having a relaxed Tony & J.J. Dillon two minutes after a major, major angle that incensed the ire of Dillon & Ric Flair.

(NWA/SYND.) - [WWF]: Gilbert d. South; O.M.E. win squash; Dick Murdoch d. Steel; M Ex d. Price/Hogan; Perez/Zbyszko d. Texas Broncos when Dustin & Kendall crash into each other; Hayes/JYD d. Russian A's. DRAW-PLUS.

[NWA PRO]: NWA TV TITLE---Steiner d. Russian Assassin I in key match. RESTHOLD.

(WWF) - [SUPERSTARS]: Randy Savage wins DQ over Akeem when Bubba Bossman interferes but Randy reluctant to join Hulk Hogan in post-match pose; Bushwackers d. Tom Stone/Jerry Price; Rick Martel d. Barry Horowitz; Other winners: Rick Rude, Powers of Pain. ANGLE: Steve Lombardi attacks Red Rooster (Terry Taylor) and joins the Heenan Family as the Brooklyn Battler. DRAW.

[CHALLENGE]: All-squash show with Gene Okerlund interviewing Rockin' Robin in horrible angle where Sherri Martel and Robin get into scrap with Okerlund in the middle. BOMB-PLUS.

[SPOTLIGHT]: Savage-Akeem match; Rockers d. Trent Knight/Rusty Riddle; Battler-Rooster angle; Other winners: Dino Bravo, Bossman, Rougeaus. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

LINES OF THE WEEK - 1. Ricky Steamboat, TBS: "If you (Flair) want to play, stay in the sandbox!" 2. Steamboat, to J. J. Dillon, after Ricky turned out to be Mr. X: "I've been listening to you talk for 10 years about how great your men are and Mr. X shouldn't have even bothered you." 3. Bobby Heenan, WWF, during Martel-Robin scrap: "Okerlund looks like a male clerk during a sale at Bloomingdale's." 4. Jonathan Holliday, CWF: "I'm 2-tone, full-blown, Technicolor and Kodachrome." 5. Jim Cornette, TBS: "You could take all the pieces of what Paul E. Dangerously has to say and put 'em in a thimble and still have room for the rest of your brain, David." 6. David Crockett and Cornette, TBS: DAVID, "They're tagging in and out quite a lot." JIM, "Yes, David. I've said that several times." 7. Michael Hayes, NWA PRO, on him & JYD as partners: "It ain't exactly like two Pulitzer Prize winners putting their minds together to accomplish a job." 8. Heenan, WWF: "They (Bushwackers) are like bacon and eggs from a greasy spoon restaurant."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Steamboat, TBS: "I want to thank the NWA fans for their strong support when I was away from here." 2. Heenan, WWF: "Want to know what has a temperature of 50 and an IQ of 11? The City of Birmingham. 3. Jerry Jarrett, CWA, for comment on how World Class and AWA simply had company champions. 4. Jim Ross, NWA PRO, commenting on how Steve Casey had "worked his way up through the minor leagues to get to the NWA."

QUESTION OF THE WEEK - Cornette, TBS: "Have you ever seen Mike Jackson defend the Alabama junior heavyweight championship? He's had that title 15 years and never made a defense. I guess that's how you keep it."

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. Austin Idol, CWF, calling Jonathan Holliday "The Universal Hemorrhoid." 2. Heenan, WWF, calling Akeem's finishing splash (formerly called the 747) "Air Africa."

BEST ANALYSIS - Jesse Ventura, WWF: "Akeem's spending too much time dancing around instead of going for the pin on Savage."

BLOOPER AWARD - Heenan, WWF, for saying "how about that, Taylor?" instead of later-corrected "how about that, Rooster?" during Brooklyn Battler attack.

BEST PICTURES - TBS, no ifs, ands or buts, the Steamboat-Gilbert vs. Flair-Windham match was the best-shot event on WCW in years. TBS has added a hand-held camera and used faster cuts to bring that match to life from every angle.

BEST AUDIO - 1. WWF, for Curt Hennig asking opponent, "How's this for being perfect?" 2. TBS, for Flair telling Steamboat, "You have no business in here, pal!"

BOO AWARD - TBS, simply because I wish they had considered how abrupt it was to have a calm Dillon on NWA MAIN EVENT right after the wild WCW angle. But it's a light boo.

TUBE TALK

Nothing but universal praise for TBS for the Saturday night topliner. It may have been one of the five best matches I've ever seen on TV anywhere and certainly the best TBS match since Mr. R (Brad Armstrong) vs. Ted DiBiase in 1984.....Flair's hot reax afterward made him believable as a heel in a fashion he rarely was on TV for Dusty.....Even Butch Reed looked decent back in black hair and Tony Richards of MCEE in Paducah says, "It reminded me of Reed's old Mid-South days.".....The audience was pumped up with signs and enthusiasm like a LET'S MAKE A DEAL crowd.

Eddie is involved in another angle this coming Saturday night and I hope George Scott allows him to keep his fine momentum.....One key observer tells us the Jarrett belt angle on CWA "really buries Verne Gagne" to all of the CWA viewers.....If you think I'm not loyal department: I watched and listened to two WWF and one NWA show while touring the Smithsonian and the White House Saturday.....Eddie Gilbert & Michael Hayes will have a series of "Ultimate Jeopardy" matches against Flair & Windham where if Eddie's team wins, he gets 5 minutes with J. J. At least one may be taped for NWA MAIN EVENT.

Told by correspondent Chris Siggia the new Pacific Coast (Oregon) show is a real bomb and I hope I can get some tape to confirm that. The matches sure sound that way.....I should get a FedEx copy of the first week Dusty appears on the Florida show (probably not this weekend) and we'll fill you in on what happens.....That Sherri Martel-Rockin' Robin angle was weak because neither is a ball of fire as a personality but it was funny when Okerlund was trying to separate the two of them....WWF was pushing its first D. C. Armory card hard this weekend. It includes Honky Tonk vs. Bret Hart. Bushwackers-Rougeaus and Jake/Warrior vs. Rude/Andre.

MATWATCH SUBSCRIPTIONS

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The main reason for my prediction of a so-so rating for the NBC Main Event next Friday: a little show called FULL HOUSE on ABC which has become a sleeper with kids and teens and has pulled a 29 and 30 share in its last two outings, plus the perpetual strength of PERFECT STRANGERS, neither of which were in the 8-9 (EST) slot last year..... Some rumors are springing up that Turner may advance its second PPV of the year to April but I hope that's just talk. I don't think it would be wise on the heels of WMS..... Tommy Rich has been told Mr. Donnie can no longer be used on TV for SCW and if he uses him in the arenas, Tommy will have to pay him out of his own pocket. Rich is not expected to stay much longer and, in fact, has done a spot CMF show in recent days, so we're told..... In a future issue, because of demand from readers, we will provide a focus on how syndication works and why your favorite local wrestling show sometimes disappears and a new one shows up in its place..... Finally, Washington was fantastic! I hope all of you get to visit for one inaugural in your lifetime because it will be a lifelong memory. God bless, FSB!

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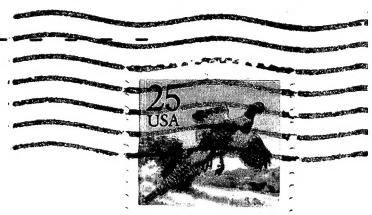
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